employed with commercial institutions, contracting with the Railways;

(b) if, so the details thereof and the posts held by each of them formerly;

(c) whether it is also a fact that they give undue benefits to the private enterprises because of their earlier knowledge and acquaintance and affect the working of the Railways, and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto and the steps taken to check the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) to (d) Only Group 'A' officers are required to seek prior permission from the Government for getting employed with a private firm during the first two years following retirement and Group 'B' officers are required to inform the Railway in such cases. Apart from this, there is no restriction or condition in the retired railway employees accepting commercial employment with firms including those contracting with the Railways. Therefore, it is not possible to maintain information regarding all such employees, employed with commercial institutions. In view of this, it is also not possible to have feed back on such retired employees giving undue benefit, if any, to others.

Support from fund for Sciecne Infrastructure in Karnataka

1179. SHRI K. B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) How many academic institutions in Karnataka have been supported through the programmes of Fund of Improvement of Science and Technology Infrastructure during 2001-2002 and 2002-2003; so far; and

(b) the amount released to these institutions during the above period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT):

(a) and (b) Under the Fund for Improvement of Science and Technology Infrastructure (FIST) Program, so far a total support of Rs. 21.7 crores has

been extended to 36 departments in 9 academic institutions in the Karnataka State.

Patents on Scientific Inventions

†1180. SHRI RAMADHAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any patent has been obtained at National and International level with regard to scientific and technological inventions;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what efforts are being made by Government to obtain help from the individuals and small organizations, for getting the patents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT): (a) to (c) Patents have been obtained by Department of Science and Technology, Department of Biotechnology and CSIR in India and foreign countries. 191 patents were granted by foreign countries and 576 in India in the last three years. No help is being taken by the government from individuals and small organizations for getting patents. However, there are a number of schemes through which assistance is provided to individuals and small organizations to obtain patents. The agencies active in this aspect are Patent Facilitating Centre, National Research Development Corporation and National Innovation Foundation.

Research on tea Technology

1181. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state whether Government would consider to introduce research on tea technology and other relevant matters of this technology in Regional Research Laboratory, Jorhat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT): No Sir, there is no such proposal under consideration at present.

Relief to Drought/flood hit States

1182. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU):
SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.